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**Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters**

# Issues for consideration by Committee for Development Policy at its 1999 session

## Note by the Secretary-General

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/46 (annex I, para. 10), the annual work programme for the Committee is to be assigned by the Council before the end of February preceding the next plenary of the Committee, which in 1999 will take place from 26 to 30 April.

2. From the Council's deliberations at its substantive session of 1998, two issues have already been retained for further work by the Committee. One is the refinement of the criteria for inclusion in and graduation from the list of least developed countries established on a triennial basis (see Council resolution 1998/46, annex I, para. 9). The next review of the list of least developed countries is due in 2000. Second, and directly related to this matter the Committee has been requested in paragraph 2 of Council resolution 1998/39 to devote attention at its next session to the issue of vulnerability and to how a measure of vulnerability might affect the designation of the least developed countries.

3. Among the further issues that the Council may wish to assign to the Committee, the three described below are of widespread interest and concern, and would also be in keeping with ongoing work in both the Council and other United Nations bodies. The first follows directly from deliberations in the Council. The other two were identified by the Committee for Development Planning in its report for 1998 as subjects on which further work could usefully be undertaken.[1]

4. First, with the acceleration in the pace of globalization, the intensity and complexity of the interactions between the macroeconomic, structural, trade, financial and developmental aspects of economic policy-making have risen. The question of policy coherence has thus become critical for all participants in the global economy. Agreed conclusions 1997/1 of the Council include a call for further study of these issued, including by the Committee for Development Planning or its successor arrangements, in order to develop approaches and modalities that the Council could consider at a subsequent session (see A/52/3, chap. II, agreed conclusions 1997/1, sect. III.A). This could be considered at various levels, including (a) coherence in general policy stances among the major actors in the global economy; (b) coherence of policies within countries to maximize the impact of development cooperation; and (c) coherence in the programmes and policy precepts with respect to economic development, including development cooperation, on the part of the major international organizations (notably the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization.

5. Second, to ensure that all the world's population benefits from globalization, a supportive international

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economic environment to promote an appropriate pace and pattern of world economic growth is indispensable. This environment needs to be strong, stable, sustainable and balanced among countries. It is especially important to integrate the lagging developing countries into the global economy and to facilitate their "catch-up" to the levels of income, wealth and productivity of more advanced countries as rapidly as feasible. The Committee could examine the parameters of the global environment, including its institutional features and its management, that would enable lagging economies to avail themselves more completely of trade specialization, capital inflows and technology transfer, and other aspects of globalization that support development.

6. Third and more narrowly, globalization and effective integration into a globalizing world economy depend critically on the smooth transfer of technology to countries in the process of catching up to best-practice production and marketing technologies. The Committee could examine the impact, including the social dimensions, of advances in technology and the information revolution on developing countries in general and the least developed countries in particular. Transfers of such technologies can be provided through several channels, which as a rule are complementary to each other. Trade and licensing are obvious mechanisms, while effective and appropriate technology transfer through foreign direct investment by transnational corporations is another. To sustain the benefits of such technology transfers, the host country must assimilate, transform and build upon the capacities acquired in this manner. The Committee could also examine these processes and the actions necessary to improve their effectiveness.

7. It would be useful if the Council were to identify any issues, in addition to the designated work on least developed countries and vulnerability, on which it may wish to be advised by the Committee.

*Notes*

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 14* (E/1998/34), chap. V.